



The Victorian U.F.O. Research Society
P.O. Box 43, Moorabbin, Vic. 3189 Australia.
If undeliverable, return to:—

POSTAGE
PAID.
BRIGHTON

FL

ARCHIVES FOR UFO RESEARCH

PO BOX 11027

S-600 11

NORRKÖPING, SWEDEN



Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VBH0122

Australia U.F.O. Bulletin

THE AUSTRALIAN U.F.O. BULLETIN

This is the official publication of the Victorian U.F.O. Research Society

P.O. Box 43,
Moorabbin, Victoria 3189
Australia



V.U.F.O.R.S. OFFICE BEARERS

President
JUDITH M. MAGEE

Vice-President
PAUL NORMAN

Secretary
MARK SAWYERS

Treasurer
CLIVE YATES

Membership Secretary
STAFFORD HALL

Sightings Investigations Officer
PAUL NORMAN

Librarian
JOHN W. AUCHETTL

Publications Officer
M. FERNANDEZ

Officer
STEPHEN PARTRIDGE

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

V.U.F.O.R.S.

Full Membership — \$6.00 per annum
which includes free issues of magazine.

Overseas Membership — \$U.S. 8.00

Single copy of magazine (50¢) Aust. plus
postage.

WELCOME:

The Society welcomes reports of unusual Aerial Phenomena and evaluates each report on its own merits and if requested, reports will be held in the strictest confidence. The Society exchanges information with many similar Australian and overseas organisations, as well as scientists, and disseminates to the public, available information on the subject, which includes local, interstate and the latest overseas developments in its quarterly publication "Australian U.F.O. Bulletin," posted to all members. Address all communications to:

V.U.F.O.R.S.,
P.O. Box 43, Moorabbin,
Victoria 3189

Contributions published do not necessarily reflect the policy of the V.U.F.O.R.S.

© COPYRIGHT PUBLICATION

No part of this publication may be reproduced
without prior written consent of V.U.F.O.R.S.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

A cross appearing in this square
indicates that your subscription is
now due.

| First | Final |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Society History

1957

1957

At this point perhaps it may be opportune to present a brief history of the Victorian U.F.O. Research Society.

The earliest U.F.O. group to form in Australia was the "Australian Flying Saucer Bureau" under the direction of Edgar Jarrold and Andrew Tomas, in the early 1950s. At the same time, Fred Stone inaugurated the "Australian Flying Saucer Research Society" in Adelaide. After approximately two years the Bureau closed down and was regarded as a branch of the "Australian Flying Saucer Research Society" under Andrew Tomas. This shortly broke from Adelaide and became the "Australian U.F.O. Investigation Centre" with Dr. Clifford at its head until 1958, when the Presidency passed to Dr. Lindtner.

The "Australian Flying Saucer Research Society (Victorian Branch)" was formed on the 17th February, 1957 as a branch of the "Australian Flying Saucer Research Society" and later that year was re-organised as the "Victorian Flying Saucer Research Society" with Mr. Peter E. Norris L.L.B. as President. In 1968 the name was again altered — this time to the "Victorian U.F.O. Research Society".

During this time, the Society has published various papers and is probably best known for its publication Australian Flying Saucer Review, curtailed in 1972 due to high costs and subsequently superseded by the Australian U.F.O. Bulletin and at one stage sponsored and produced a quarter-hour program on a Melbourne radio station under the heading of "The Truth Behind Flying Saucers".

The Society had held a dispassionate attitude on U.F.O.s, claiming it is a scientific problem deserving closer attention. It has also met regularly in General Meetings and maintains the largest U.F.O. library in the Southern Hemisphere, making books available by post, to members throughout the Commonwealth.

Membership of this Society — which maintains the largest membership of any U.F.O. organisation in the Southern Hemisphere — is open to all who are genuinely interested in the subject.

Australia U.F.O. Bulletin

The Victorian U.F.O. Research Society

P.O. Box 43, Moorabbin, 3109, Vic. Australia - VBH 0122

Publication No VBH0122

Registered by Australia Post

M A R C H 1988

CONTENTS

PAGE

- 2 On the UFO Trail
by Paul Norman
- 3 UFO Buff urges more
tolerance, Allan Wilson
- 4 UFO report from a AIAA
Member, By Peter Sturrock
Stanford UNI, USA
- 6 Special Notice
- 7 The Knowles-Nullarbor
Encounter, By J.AUCHETTL
- 8 PRESS 21.1.1988
- 10 PRESS 22.1.1988
- 12 PRESS 23.1.1988
- 13 PRESS 24.1.1988
- 15 Cont.. The UFO that cant
be explained, DEC 87
- 16 DIARY DATES.

© COPYRIGHT 1987

NO MATERIAL FROM THIS
PUBLICATION MAY BE
REPRODUCED IN ANY WAY
WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN
PERMISSION OF VUFORS
OR ARTICAL OWNERS.

MEMBERSHIP

AUSTRALIA ONLY \$7

OVERSEAS

| | |
|----------|------|
| SEA MAIL | \$9 |
| AIR MAIL | \$13 |

MEMBER

International Committtee for UFO Research

P.O. Box 43, Moorabbin, Vic. 3109, Australia



EDITORIAL

VUFORS is a properly constituted Society -not a club - and as such is not responsible to any other UFO organisation. We are happy to co-operate with groups or individuals who are prepared to work with us or on a reciprocal information basis.

Since our formation in 1957, VUFORS investigators have checked numerous reports and interviewed many witnesses, some of whom have wished to remain anonymous and this wish is most assuredly honored. The results of any investigations carried out are published in our quarterly Bulletin.

It is a great pity people relay their sightings to the media in an attempt to solve their experience, as these vested interests twist the facts around to suit their own theories and/or those of their editors! Little Green Men? I hasten to suggest that the media, science and pseudo science are by far, greener than those about whom they write, discredit or completely ignore. While we are still sending our astronauts into space with a fire-cracker under them, the UFOnuts appear to have conquered gravity and are capable of hovering or taking off at fantastic speeds without sound or the aid of fire-works. There have been a number of incidents where the media has hounded witnesses immediately after their traumatic experience, which does nothing to help them overcome the stress of the event.

These experiences come as a complete surprise and the majority of sightees have little or no knowledge of the UFO subject, and possibly have never read anything other than critical and inaccurate press clips. It is VUFORS policy to protect these people, where possible, from public ridicule, supercilious journalists, TV. and radio commentators. They at least receive a sympathetic hearing when they relate their experience to VUFORS. We can then, with a clear conscience, go about our investigations with confident, co-operative and relaxed witnesses.

REMEMBER: IF YOU HAVE MADE A U.F.O. SIGHTING, WE WOULD BE VERY PLEASED TO HEAR ABOUT IT. WE WANT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, DATE AND TIME OF SIGHTING, DESCRIPTION OF WEATHER CONDITIONS ETC. ALL OR ANY OF WHICH WE WILL KEEP CONFIDENTIAL IF DESIRED.

ON THE UFO TRAIL

Paul B. Norman



By now, most members and subscribers will have noted the press reports, telecasts and radio talkback programs concerning UFO activity over the Nullarbor. This is the type of mysterious event which makes ufologists out of sceptics and clowns out of pseudo-scientists and academics.

Already, we have at least five "explanations", following in rapid succession from the scientific community before investigations were even begun. Meanwhile, the UFO phenomenon continues to grind the sacred cow of orthodox science into hamburger.

One of the first "explanations" came from a professor of impossibility PhD ETC ETC ETC, as being consistent with a meteorite, in spite of the fact that the object landed on top of a motor car before flying away awhile later.

Following this attempt another "solution" was put forward by a second gentleman of learning that, "The description of the event was consistent with "dry lightning", even though other motorists were driving along the road and viewed the maneuvering object.

After that amusing interpretation, another spokesman came forward with the "solution", "They were fooled by the rising sun". Even it did fly away in another direction. And even if motorist travelling in the opposite direction observed the maneuvering object.

Another expert suggested it must have originated at the Woomera Test Range. That statement was followed by another spokesman who said this was not true because it would not be "allowed". It is the opinion of this humble ufologist --- of course not, unless it was out of control. But even so, how could it strike or lift a motor car, drop it to the ground with only minor damage?

The Nullarbor vicinity is famous within the UFO research community for sightings and encounters with unidentified flying and hovering objects. One outstanding report came from an airline pilot who reported an unknown flying object at the same time and location where a motorist was filming the UFO from the ground. Many UFOs are sighted or encountered and never reported until years later because the observers fear ridicule.

A worldwide scientific group is in operation which is searching for extra-terrestrials out there. The system was founded by Dr. Carl Sagan. But Dr. Sagan appears to have the attitude that he will not recognize such existence unless he is first contacted by the life forms through his radio telescopes. Like Frank Sinatra, who sings that he will do it his way, this radio astronomer will not recognize them unless they do it his way and secures his permission to land. The facts are the extra-terrestrials may insist on doing it their way, while radio astronomers ignore the activity taking place below their dish

Yes, we have proof of little green men. They are humans who are so green in fact they don't realize that something which they do not understand is already happening. These little green men are numbered among the journalists, who write about everything and are experts on nothing except mis-quotations and out of context reporting. These little green men are those who insist that they are the cream of human intelligence and know everything, well, almost everything. In short, they say there are no such things as unidentified flying objects.

In all walks of life one can find the little green men all over the world who want to remain green. Perhaps because it is a subconscious fear of the unknown. Meanwhile, as this article goes to press, the object that was over the Nullarbor has not been satisfactorily identified.



PAUL NORMAN
Investigator for the
VICTORIAN UFO
RESEARCH SOCIETY

For private interviews with witnesses who have observed unidentified flying objects.
The Society is in direct contact with leading scientists who are endeavouring to solve the UFO phenomena.

People interested in this subject may subscribe to The Australian UFO Bulletin,
PO Box 43, Monashville, Vic., 3189.

UFO buff urges more tolerance

SUNRAYSIA UFO enthusiast Mr Allan Wilson is convinced recent sightings are genuine.

He believed there were many more sightings, but the community's sceptical attitude made people reticent to report them, he said.

The fear of being disbelieved, or being thought "a nut" made people keep their suspicions of a UFO observation to themselves, he said.

"There must be more people in the area who would have made sightings, but they feel people aren't open-minded enough to accept it," he said.

He said the fact a recent sighting from the Paddlesteamer Melbourne of an object with a curved front and pointed rear was seen by more than a dozen people should lend credibility to the tale.

"I don't want to sound like a UFO crank, but I feel some of the reports are quite valid," he said.

Mr Wilson said over the years he had heard many reports of sightings, especially in the Millewa, and had personally had two "encounters."

Mr Wilson's first experience with a UFO was in 1952 as a passenger on a train travelling over the Nullarbor Plain.

He said he was one of many passengers on the train who witnessed "an orange light with a yellow tail."

It was this experience he said which made him a "believer."

His second experience was about three years ago at Pump Hill, Merbein, driving back from the Wentworth Club when he was "followed" by four white lights, he said.

He said the lights couldn't be discounted as just stars, satellites or mirages.

"Mirages of lights don't put dents or a film of smoke over cars," he said, referring to another incident about a week ago on the Nullarbor.

Apart from a reported "landing" in the Millewa some years ago, he said he had also been told of another incident near Lake Cullulleraine when a car lost its accelerating power after being "chased by very strong lights."

He said the driver reported that he had attempted to accelerate away from the lights, but was drained of its power.

"The lights were holding him back," he said.

It was these first-hand experiences, fuelled by reports from others in the district, which has led to an enduring interest in the topic, he said.

Mr Wilson, 54, has been a member of the Victorian UFO Research Society for more than 10 years.

He said he could understand why the family travelling in the car which was reportedly "attacked" by a UFO recently on the Nullarbor Plain, was frightened.

"It's the fear of the unknown. If I was confronted with it I would also be terrified," he said.

He said the popular myth of "flying saucers," and "extra-terrestrials" was a limited perspective.

Objects both cigar and egg shaped, and fast moving lights zig-zagging across the sky, may also be UFOs, he said.

He said science could not explain such occurrences, and it was important to remain open-minded.

"We're only a tiny speck of sand in the vastness of the universe. It's naive to think we're the only form of life," he said.

"Can you imagine what life will be like in about 400 years?"

"If there is another form of life they could be further advanced than us," he said.

He said he realised by speaking out on the matter, he was laying himself open to ridicule, but urged others to be open-minded.

"In the event of an encounter, step forward and say something, it may coincide with another sighting and help research," he said.

He also suggested if people were interested in UFOs they could become members of the society and receive newsletters documenting research from around the world.



UFO Reports from AIAA Members

By PETER A. STURROCK
Stanford University

Most UFO reports concern the experiences of laymen, but scientists and engineers divulge accounts resembling others when asked to do so in appropriate circumstances

For many years the "UFO phenomenon" has greatly interested the public but has elicited comparatively little response from scientists. "UFO phenomenon" means this question: Do reports of "unidentified flying objects" (UFOs) indicate or establish a set of facts which cannot be interpreted in terms of known natural phenomena and technological devices? And, if so, can these facts be organized into consistent patterns? Popular discussions of the UFO phenomenon pay special attention to the possibility that some of the observations yield a factual pattern supporting the hypothesis that extraterrestrial vehicles visit Earth.

Most scientists hoped that the problem would be definitely clarified and possibly settled by the "Condon Report" based on the "Colorado Project." Early reviews of the Report presented mixed opinions.^{1,2} The published account of the UFO Symposium organized by the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1969 revealed a wide spectrum of opinion concerning the Condon Report at that time.⁴ The same is probably true today.



PETER A. STURROCK, Professor of Space Science in Stanford's School of Engineering and Professor of Astrophysics in its Applied Physics Dept., studied mathematics at Cambridge Univ., England. He won the Rayleigh Prize in 1949 and a prize fellowship in 1952. Dr. Sturrock went to Stanford in 1955, and was appointed a professor there in 1961. Since '64 he has chaired its Institute for Plasma Research and now also chairs its astronomy program. He is a Fellow of APS and RAS.

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) alone among established scientific organizations has taken the initiative in trying to bring the UFO phenomenon to the attention of serious scientists. In 1967 its Technical Committee on Space and Atmospheric Science set up a subcommittee "to gain a fresh and objective perspective on the UFO problem." In 1970 this subcommittee published a position paper.³ Its deliberations also led to publication of two extensive accounts of notable UFO observations.^{4,7}

Scientists have no doubt been discouraged from taking the problem seriously by the bizarre nature of some of the reports and emphasis upon the "extraterrestrial hypothesis" (ETH). The fact that most reports are anecdotal in nature and come from nonscientists also causes skepticism.

In his book "The UFO Experience,"⁸ J. A. Hynek confronts and counters the widespread view that "scientists do not make UFO reports"; he quotes a number of reports originating with scientists.

Did Hynek tap a unique group of scientists, or would many more make similar reports given a fair reason for divulging pertinent experiences? It appeared that this question could be answered by a simple survey over a limited sample of scientifically trained persons, and that it would be possible also to obtain a cross section of opinions concerning the UFO phenomenon.

The Executive Committee of the San Francisco Chapter of AIAA gave permission for a survey of its membership. This article describes the survey and gives the results.

The questionnaire shown here was mailed to all
Astronautics & Aeronautics

UFO QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your subjective assessment of the probability that UFO's represent a scientifically significant phenomenon?
2. Have you ever witnessed an aerial phenomenon which you could not identify? Yes ☐ No ☐ (Check one)
If the answer is "Yes," please continue. If "No," please complete No. 8.
3. Please give place, date, time (am/pm). _____
4. Did you report the event? Yes ☐ No ☐
If so, to which organization? _____
5. Please give a narrative account of the event on a separate sheet of paper.
6. If you have not covered the following points in your narrative account, please give the following information:
What were you doing at the time? _____
Age at time of observation. _____ Number of witnesses. _____
Weather conditions. _____ Duration of sighting. _____ Number of objects. _____
Maximum angular diameter of largest object: Point-like ☐; Smaller than Moon ☐;
Larger than Moon ☐.
Estimate of closest approach of nearest object. _____
Was object(s) luminous? _____ Color(s)? _____
7. What answer would you have given to Question 1 *before* you witnessed this event?
8. The following information is requested for our files but will not be divulged:
Name _____ Address _____
Tel. No. (optional) _____
Brief statement of scientific training: _____

1175 members of the San Francisco Chapter on April 9, 1973, and 423 questionnaires (36%) were returned. All subsequent percentages here refer to the number of questionnaires returned.

Question 1 asked: "What is your subjective assessment of the probability that UFOs represent a scientifically significant phenomenon?" Of the 423 returns, 93 (22%) gave numerical estimates (see T-1) of this probability and revealed a very wide spread of opinion, the median estimate being about $P = 0.4$, twenty-two returns having P in the range $0 < P \leq 1$, and eleven in the range $.9 \leq P < 1$. Notably ten returns give $P = 0$ and five returns give $P = 1$. Since these 0 and 1 values would be unchanged by further information, the groups giving them can not approach agreement by evaluating further information.⁹

Most returns (290, or 69%) gave verbal answers to Question 1. T-2 groups these, and for comparison includes the numerical returns. Those giving verbal responses shows even more dispersion in their views. Of those making verbal responses, 25% are definite ("impossible" or "certain"); of those making numerical responses, only 16% are definite ($P = 0$ or $P = 1$).

Of the remaining 40 returns, 33 made no response to Question 1, two made noncommittal responses, one asserted that the topic is not important, one that the topic is exciting, one that the topic should be investigated, and two (justifiably) that the question is not clear.

Here you will see the reports given in response to Question 2 of the survey, arbitrarily arranged by the times of day the person had the experience.

Many persons giving a negative answer to Question 2 nevertheless volunteered comments. For instance; eight expressed the view that further investigation is necessary, whereas one said the opposite. Two offered the opinion that UFOs are extraterrestrial, and four said that they are not. Five expressed the view that UFOs are natural phenomena; one called them a spurious phenomenon; and three stated that they consider UFOs to be "real." Three made "put-down" remarks about the whole subject, and four said

T-1 NUMERICAL RESPONSE TO QUESTION 1

"What is your subjective assessment of the probability that UFOs represent a scientifically significant phenomenon?"

| P | N(P) | P | N(P) |
|------|------|-----|------|
| 0 | 10 | .4 | 1 |
| 10-9 | 1 | .5 | 17 |
| 10-6 | 2 | .55 | 1 |
| 10-4 | 1 | .6 | 2 |
| 10-3 | 2 | .7 | 2 |
| .01 | 7 | .75 | 1 |
| .05 | 3 | .8 | 5 |
| .08 | 1 | .85 | 1 |
| .1 | 5 | .9 | 10 |
| .15 | 1 | .9 | 1 |
| .2 | 13 | 1 | 5 |
| .3 | 1 | | |

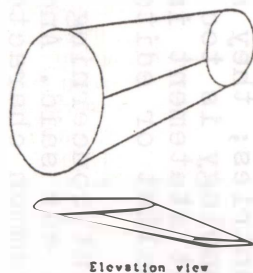


MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL IS YOURS DUE ???

REPORT 1. 50 mi. N.E. of St. Louis, Missouri. July, 1947. 9-10 a.m. Age, 14. Nailing corrugated panels on a barn roof. Witnesses, 0. Weather, clear—no clouds. Duration, less than 1 min. One object, smaller than Moon. Moved east to west, slightly south of direction overhead, at 10-20,000 ft. Not luminous. Disk-shaped, uniform white. Not reported.

REPORT 2. Napa, Calif. ca. 1956, summer (too long ago to recall accurately). Age, 29. Working in backyard. Witnesses, 1. Weather, clear. Duration, 5 min. One object, point-like. Closest approach, 4-5 mi. Luminous, silver/white. Not reported.

REPORT 3. Dayton, Ohio. 1949. 2-5 p.m. Age 30. Witnesses, 4-5. Weather, clear and sunny. Duration, 3 hr. Two objects, larger than Moon. Closest approach, 2-3 mi. Silver, reflective object. Reported to Wright Field UFO Project. *Narrative account:* My wife and I and a woman friend were sitting in the backyard of our house in Dayton, Ohio in 1949. It was a Sunday afternoon, sunny, clear sky when we sighted two stationary disks at an elevation angle of 30° or less. All three of us saw them as well as neighbors we called. I studied them through 7 x 35 binoculars and noticed three lines connecting the disks, as follows:



(The sketch does not convey this, but the disks were essentially horizontal with the left one larger and above the right one.) I called the Wright Field Tower and described the location but they could see nothing. The tower was approximately 10 miles from my home.

The next day, my wife, myself and several neighbors were interviewed by the AF UFO Project from Wright Field.

I have since decided we must have seen an unusual kite.

REPORT 4. Central Nevada, spring, 1962. Dusk. Age 22. Driving home from fishing trip. Witnesses, 3 others. Weather, clear. Largest object, larger than Moon. Closest approach, approximately 5 mi. (?). Luminous—sufficient to light horizon. Dull white. Not reported. *Narrative account:* Observed rapidly moving bursts of light for a period of over 2 hr. Four of us saw several "events" at various directions from N to SW (135°) from our vantage point. The sightings occurred near NAS Fallon, Nevada. We ruled out any Navy activities and, although the area is a marshy one, the bursts were not associated with methane luminescence, which we had all seen before. I lived near the area for 25 years and made several (like hundreds) of trips to this area and never saw another event.

REPORT 5. University of British Columbia, Vancouver. January, 1970. 7 p.m. Age, 28. Walking home from class. Witnesses, 0. Weather, dark, cold and clear. Duration, 10 min. One object, smaller than Moon. Closest approach, unknown. Luminous, orange. Not reported. *Narrative account:* Sighted orange disk, which drifted slowly for some time, then suddenly shrank and disappeared. After disappearance, could detect no occlusion of starry background.

REPORT 6. Eastern U.S. (on

airline flight). 1960. 7 p.m. Age, 35. Weather, clear, just at end of twilight. Duration, few min. Three objects, smaller than Moon. Luminous, red. Not reported. *Narrative account:* Three red linages of indeterminate size and range maintained same position relative to aircraft for several minutes.

REPORT 7. Santa Cruz Mountains, California. April 6, 1973. 7:45 p.m. Age, 51. Driving on Interstate 280 in west San Jose. Witnesses, 2. Weather, clear. Duration, 2-3 sec. One object, point-like, at 25-30 mi. Not luminous, bright, reddish. Not reported. *Narrative account:* Object appeared about 45° up from the horizon and appeared to be climbing slightly leaving a trailing sparkle similar to space hardware coming into atmosphere. Looked like the typical drawings of Christmas Star.



REPORT 8. 6 mi. north of Espario, Calif. Late 1930s. 8-10 p.m. Age, 9-12. Witnesses, 0. Weather, clear, probably summer. Duration, many seconds. One object, either point-like or smaller than moon. Closest approach, less than 1 mi. Luminous, blue glow. Not reported. *Narrative account:* Relatively young when the event occurred. I recall standing outside observing the stars when this blue glow seemed to descend from the sky and it appeared to land in a neighboring field. This frightened me so I went inside. I have no memories beyond this. It was a clear warm night.

REPORT 9. South of Whiskey Town Lake, Calif. Summer, 1967, around 9 p.m. Age, 47. Camping. Witnesses, 1 other. Weather, warm (80 F), humid, clear. Duration, approximately 1 min. One object, smaller than Moon. Closest approach, 1 mi. Luminous, bluish white. Not reported. *Narrative account:* Bright object moved east to west along transmission lines, then faded out. It moved several hundred yards. Several non-exotic explanations could account for sighting, but none could be confirmed or denied.

REPORT 10. Palo Alto, Calif. ca. 1958. About 9 p.m. Age, 50. Engaged in amateur astronomy. Witnesses, 2. Weather, clear. Duration, 20 sec. Three objects, smaller than Moon. First estimate of distance 100,000 ft; later estimate 50 ft. Luminous, dusky color. Not reported. *Narrative account:* While making astronomical observations in my backyard, I and another observer witnessed a most convincing illusion of three slightly luminous craft flying at great altitude and speed and in complete silence.

About a week later the phenomena recurred. This time one of them broke formation and made a noise and I realized they were white owls gliding in perfect silence (as only owls can), made to appear slightly luminous by diffuse city lights from below. An owl flies like a ghost.

REPORT 11. Foothills near Ojai, California. 1963. 9-10 p.m. Age, 20. Camping. Witnesses, none. Weather, clear. Duration, 10 min. One object, point-like, at indeterminate distance. Luminous, white. Not reported. *Narrative account:* I was on a weekend outing with some boy scouts and around 9 or 10 p.m. I went to bed under the stars (no tent or coverings). While I was awake and looking at the stars I noticed an object (about as bright and having

the size of the north star) moving at right angles. These angles were very long and sharp. In my estimation they were above the capabilities of modern aircraft. The object then left the field of view at exceptional speed.

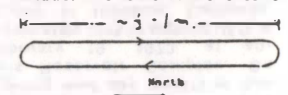
REPORT 12. North of Jordanton, Texas. About December 31, 1951 (+ 1 yr.). Around 9:30 p.m. Age, 12+. Standing on the front porch of the house with my father looking to the north. Witnesses, 2. Weather, cool, low clouds occasionally, after storm. Duration, 2-3 min. One object, smaller than Moon, some miles away. Luminous, color of mercury street lamp, but much brighter. Not reported. *Narrative account:* The phenomenon I observed was at least twenty years ago, yet it is still fresh in my mind as to what I saw. There had been a storm, and to the north there was an area that was clear with a few clouds to the left, right and higher up. There was a Moon out. The "object" I saw resembled a disk of light as one might expect from the reflection of a searchlight on the base of a cloud ceiling. The area surrounding the "object" was bathed with considerable after-glow. The path of the object was such that it dipped and turned more or less in a figure eight. There appeared to be some regularity to its motion. The sky around the "object" was clear. The path of the object took it near the horizon and back up a few degrees. I watched it for several minutes before it disappeared. Today, I would be prone to dismiss it as a search-light except for the brilliance and the lack of clouds, or any visible shall of light. Earlier "UFO" type sighting occurred in the summer of 1947—several (more than 10) disk-like objects flew overhead. (They appeared to tumble and oscillate). My grandmother called my attention to them as flying saucers. They did look like disks to me then. This was

during the period of the "bubuck lights."

REPORT 13. Virginia City, Montana. August 10, 1972. 10 p.m. Age, 31. Vacation visit to ghost town taking pictures. Witnesses, at least 4. Weather, very clear sky. Duration, 5 sec. Could not see object, only trail. Estimated distance, 15 mi. Not reported, but heard on news next day. *Narrative account:* Orange streak across sky from high altitude. High velocity object—orange trail remained.

REPORT 14. Stanford, California. Spring, 1965 (or 1964). 10 p.m. Age, 21. Witnesses, 2. One object, smaller than Moon. Not reported. *Narrative account:* At about 10:00 p.m. on a clear windless evening in the spring of 1965 (I think), my fiancée (now wife) and I were standing outside Florence Moore Hall on the Stanford University campus. We both observed a phenomenon for which I have no explanation.

We noticed a lighted object overhead at an altitude I estimated to be 2000-4000 ft. We watched it for roughly a half-hour before leaving, with the object still visible and doing its thing. The object was silent, but it moved slowly along a closed path which, in my opinion, could have been negotiated only by a noisy helicopter or possibly by a quietly powered balloon. The path appeared to be an elongated racetrack oval at a constant altitude. The turns at the ends of



The oval were extremely tight, and I think I could discern deceleration going into the turns and acceleration coming out. I think it took the object 5-10 min. to complete a circuit.

Only the light(s) of the object

that they are openminded about it.

Besides these explicit reports, several correspondents stated that they had witnessed aerial phenomena which they could not identify, but did not describe a specific event in detail. One person thought that the phenomena could have been identified if he had a background in

meteorology. Another stated that he had frequently seen what he thought were shooting stars. Another person recalled observing an event which he could not identify at the time, but which turned out to be the launching of a missile from Vandenberg AFB.

An aircraft pilot, with 41 years of flying time, much at night, reported many sightings of meteors, satellites and other objects. On one six-hour flight from Naxli to Honolulu, he once saw four satellites (point-like objects, seen by reflected light, at a distance of 150-200 n.mi.). He reported also seeing meteors as well as objects of space junk hardware luminously burning up, showing various colors, and looking like fireballs.

Another correspondent referred to an event recorded on film exposed in a rocket experiment at

White Sands Missile Range in 1965. Details of this observation were not included in the questionnaire, but had been transmitted to me at an earlier date, independently of this survey. For this reason, details of this event are not included in this article.

Scientists, as the reader sees, will respond to a questionnaire concerning UFOs. The questionnaire sent to AIAA's San Francisco Section members prompted a high proportion of returns, and almost all respondents were willing to give their names. It is probable that the guarantee of anonymity helped gain a high return.

The responses show no consensus whatever concerning the nature and scientific importance of the UFO phenomenon. Views cover the entire spectrum from "impossible" to "certain" in reply

to the question, "Do UFOs represent a scientifically significant phenomenon?"

Of those making positive reports (answering "yes" to Question 2), some subsequently interpreted their observation as a known phenomenon (R.3, R.10, and R.16). Some others may in fact be known phenomena. For instance, R.5 may have been caused by a barium-cloud experiment; R.7 might have been a launch from Vandenberg AFB; R.9 may have been St. Elmo's fire; and R.13 may have been a rocket trail.

On the other hand, some of the reports are in fairly close accord with types of UFO observation classified by Hynek.⁴ (Hynek's classification is concerned, of course, only with observations which he could not explain in terms of known phenomena

T-2 VERBAL RESPONSE TO QUESTION 1

| Degree | Verbal | | Numerical | | |
|------------|--------|-----|-----------|-----|-------------|
| Impossible | 38 | 13% | 10 | 11% | P = 0 |
| Impossible | 91 | 32% | 22 | 14% | 0 < P ≤ .1 |
| Possible | 68 | 23% | 45 | 50% | .1 < P ≤ .9 |
| Probable | 58 | 20% | 11 | 12% | .9 ≤ P < 1 |
| Certain | 35 | 12% | 5 | 5% | P = 1 |

was (were) visible, so I couldn't estimate its dimensions. I don't recall the nature of the light(s), except that it (they) was (were) discrete and there was some color. My memory of the particulars of the sighting is obviously hazy, but I was (and still am) perplexed by how the object could remain airborne at such a low speed and without audible propulsion, and by how it repeatedly followed the same path.

I did not report this sighting.

REPORT 15. Portola Valley, California. October 10, 1970. 10 p.m. Ago. 29 +. Walking dog in backyard. Witnesses: 1. Weather, clear, star-lit sky. Duration, 1 min. One object, smaller than Moon. 500-1000 ft away. Luminous. Initially intensive, then fading; steadily pulsing, bluish white. Not reported. Narrative account: On or about October 10, 1970, I was walking our dog in our backyard at about 10 p.m., when a bright, bluish-white object giving steadily pulsating (from weaker to strongly bright) light appeared overhead in slightly northerly direction (i.e. above Stanford Accelerator or thereabouts) and slowly moved in easterly direction toward Palo Alto and the Baylands. After a minute or so, trees obscured vision and phenomenon was lost from sight. It was definitely different from an airplane, or meteor(ite) since it appeared to maintain its altitude, estimated at 500-1000 ft. There was no noise whatsoever associated with the phenomenon. Called wife to witness it.

REPORT 16. Stanford, California. 1981. 11 p.m. Ago. 31. Resting before falling asleep.

or devices.) In particular, R.1, R.5 and the first part of R.12 mention moving "disks"; R.3 describes a pair of stationary disks; and the latter part of R.12 recounts a group of more than ten disks.

It is notable that, of 21 or more events involved in the survey's returns, only two are said to have been reported. In no case did a scientist go on public record as having seen a strange phenomenon that he could not explain and might be related to the UFO phenomenon. So it appears, from this survey, that if you want to find out whether scientists see UFOs you must ask them, and you probably must guarantee them anonymity. This survey certainly achieved its chief aim. It shows that a sample of scientifically trained persons reports aerial phenomena similar to so-called "UFO reports."

Witnesses, 0. Weather, cloudy. Duration, 1 sec. One object, smaller than Moon. Estimated distance, several miles. Seen in sky visible from bedroom. Not reported, because a plausible explanation of a searchlight on some low clouds was suggested by colleagues the next day.

REPORT 17. Pacific Ocean, 200 n.mi. east of Wake Island-flying at 10,000 ft. 1951, 1100 Z. Ago. 44. Event seen from as: rorome of DC-6 navigating aircraft. Witnesses, 1. Weather, scattered cumulus. Duration, less than 1 min. One object, smaller than Moon. (No known flares or rockets in area, no ships.) Closest approach, 200 feet. Luminous, green, steady color. Reported to flight operations at Wako Island. Narrative account: Bright green ball of light from below altitude of aircraft, 10,000 ft., rose above, remained steady, then drifted off in distance.

REPORT 18. (a, b, c) (All reported by same person) Narrative accounts follow. a. On official duties, mid-February, 1945—about 2100 hr. About 35 mi. northeast of Brussels, Belgium. Weather, clear, excellent visibility, starry skies. Sighting above a heavily defended area with IAZ rules of engagement in effect. No hostile or friendly aircraft within IAZ or above. Large bright object (white and yellow, with occasional red or blue) traversed a rectangular course for about 15 minutes slowly then made a very last vortical escape. Altitude of item indeterminate but estimated to be greater than 5000 ft. Item not detected by extensive surveillance, gun-laying, and navigation radar networks of anti-

References

1. Condon, E. U., director, and Gillmor, D. S., editor, *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, Blantam House, New York, 1968.
2. McDonald, J. E. (1969), *Icarus*, Vol. 11, pp. 443-447.
3. Chiu, H.-Y. (1969), *Icarus*, Vol. 11, pp. 447-450.
4. Sagan, C., and Page, T., *UFOs—A Scientific Debate*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1972.
5. Kneetner, J. P., et al. (1970), "UFO: An Appraisal of the Problem," *Astronautics & Aeronautics*, Vol. 8, No. 11, pp. 49-51.
6. McDonald, J. E. (1971), "UFO Encounter II," *Astronautics & Aeronautics*, Vol. 9, No. 7, pp. 66-70.
7. Thayer, G. D. (1971), "UFO Encounter II," *Astronautics & Aeronautics*, Vol. 9, No. 9, pp. 64-64.
8. Hynek, J. A., *The UFO Experience*, Henry Regency, Chicago, 1972.
9. Good, I. J., *Probability and the Weighing of Evidence*, Griffin Press, London, p. 49, 1950.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Weekend MAGAZINE, published in the Melbourne Age and the Sydney Morning Herald, 22 and 23rd January, 1988, is mostly inaccurate. A journalist requested permission to attend the December meeting on the instruction of her "boss".

During the three hour meeting ample time provided the newsperson to take copious notes, concerning well investigated and documented cases. The outstanding significant cases were carefully omitted by the journalist or deleted by the editorial supervisor, keeping with their anti-UFO motives. It is a well-known fact that the Age seldom prints anything about the UFO phenomenon unless statements are of a derogatory nature.

The major inaccuracy is the final paragraph. "The UFOs land in communist countries; they stay away from the Western world because our technology is too advanced and they would be discovered." That statement is bullstust which was manufactured either the journalist or editorial supervisor.

The statement concerning satellites and UFOs is just the opposite to what was said. Another documents the tongue-in-cheek twist, a common characteristic of the Age when misrepresenting the subject.

Our President, Mrs. Magee, is too well informed to make a ridiculous remark like "Where do you come from?" or "They don't cast shadows like aircraft etc" She has been in UFO research for over three decades.

The top priority of our organisation when dealing with other people is honesty, sincerity and fair play. Any further request from this source will be declined.

THE KNOWLES-NULLARBOR ENCOUNTER

7

BY JOHN.AUCHETTI

By 11am on the 21st January 1988, scant reports were starting to reach me at my office. At the same time VUFORS President Judith Magee was receiving just as many call from the media as I, and the whole Encounter was on the boil, and moving very fast.

Paul Norman was down the coast and out of contact with us for the next few hours with this in mind and with the knowledge that every minute counted, I placed a telephone call to South Australia on the chance that I could contact the Knowles Family and get an investigation on the way, and as soon as possible

After a number of calls I got onto MR FRANK PANGALLO of CH7 T.V., and thanks to Frank and his effort VUFORS was given the task to research this major encounter.

Within 48 hours the Knowles Family had arrived in Melbourne, contact was made with them and a interview was set up for the 25.1.88, with them all.

Paul was back in Melbourne for that day and the first major contact & meeting concluded with our first batch of data on the event.

As the Car was still in South Australia and under the control of CH7 T.V., Paul departed for that state to start some research and I took a aircraft flight on the 1st Feb 88 to Adelaide, S.A. to meet Paul and as arranged by the T.V. Station, to take dust samples and inspect/examine the Car.

We worked on the Car for some 2½ hours with great success, and that night I took another aircraft back to Melbourne to follow up on the Family and the many test that had to be produced, while Paul over the next few days re-tested the Car.

By the 26th Feb 88 I had arranged 12 tests, interviews, inspections and examinations. These test and results will be released by VUFORS over the next few months, but listed below are the test for your information.

1. TAPED INTERVIEWS WITH THE KNOWLES.
2. CAR INSPECTION AND DUST SAMPLES COLLECTED.
3. G.P. MEDICALS ON THE FAMILY
4. BLOOD PATHOLOGY.
5. CLINISTIX URINE TEST.
6. MB TEST BILI-COMBLR 6.
7. VETERINARY TEST ON THE DOGS.
8. DOG BLOOD PATHOLOGY.
9. PHYCHIATRIST EXAMINATION.
10. HYPNOSIS BY A M.D.
11. DUST PRE TESTS.
12. PHOTOGRAPHIC?U.V. ANALYSIS.

And the research still goes on, with a lot more tests planned for the DUST SAMPLES, and hundreds of words of research to be put down on paper and into a report.

But for the next set of VUFORS BULLETINS and our Members we are first going to provide, a) The first major Press Articals in a date line, b) Other events in the area, c) And some results from the research we have completed.

This will take time and because of other stories that we must cover it will take a number of editions of our Bulletin.

Paul Norman leaves for the U.S. to expand our research on this encounter in March so there will be a lot to report on.

SO LESTS START WITH THE PRESS.

Desert UFO puzzle

check attack claim

By NEIL McMAHON

A FAMILY's claim that they encountered a UFO as they crossed the Nullarbor early yesterday has authorities guessing.

A Perth woman in her 40s and her three adult sons claim an oval-shaped object landed on top of their car as they were driving from Western Australia to Melbourne.

They say the object picked up the car, shook it, slammed it to the ground and showered it with ash before flying away.

And police say there is physical evidence to support the claim and at least one independent witness — a truck driver who claimed to have been followed by the object.

Sean Knowles told last night of how the family car, driven by his mother and carrying him and his two brothers, had almost collided with a huge "bright glowing" object near the WA-SA border.

Sean, 21, said the object had appeared parked on the road in front of them.

"It was glowing so bright," he said.

"We swerved to miss it and nearly hit a car and caravan coming the other way."

"It was a weird looking thing and we stopped to go back and have a look."

Sean said he, his brothers and mother, had become frightened and had run back to their car,

a Ford Telstar, to get away from the object.

"It chased us, and at one stage when we were trying to get away we were doing up to 200 kmh," he said.

Sean said the object had landed on the car's roof and lifted it from the road.

He said his mother had gone into shock after she had felt on top of the car and touched the object.

"She told me it felt like a rubber suction pad."

Mrs Knowles, Sean, and her other sons Patrick, 24, and Wayne, 18, were resting last night at the Eyre Highway Motel,

at Wudinna, 350 kilometres north-west of Adelaide.

And, incredible though their story seems, police and scientists were taking the case seriously.

The family is expected to travel to Adelaide to have the car examined and to tell scientists at a UFO research centre about their experience.

They have drawn a sketch of the UFO, which they say was orange colored and egg-shaped.

Sgt Jim Furnell, of Ceduna, 500 km east of the SA-WA border, told The Sun last night the incident apparently happened about 8.30am Melbourne time.

"It looks authentic. Christ knows what's happened," he said.

The family was driving near Mundrabilla on the Eyre Highway, he said.

"They saw a light object following a truck going west along the

highway, then it turned around and caught up with them," he said.

"It landed on the roof, picked the car up, shook it violently, pressed it back on to the road and blew a tyre," he said.

SUN, VIC
21.1.1988

"It showered it with ash on the roof and the interior through the open windows. The occupants escaped to hide in the scrub. They watched the object hover around in mid-air for some time then fly off."

Sgt Fred Longley, also of Ceduna, last night was pondering how to title his official report. He thought he might just have to settle for "incident on the Nullarbor Highway".

Sgt Longley said he had taken other UFO reports but

none like the one given to him by the Knowles family.

He said he was normally sceptical, but was keeping an open mind.

Sgt Longley said Mrs Knowles and her sons were obviously distressed when they walked into his police station at lunchtime yesterday.

"These people have definitely seen something," he said.

"Just what — well I don't know."

They were in a terrible state, even though it was five

hours after the incident ... very upset.

"You could say white-faced, shaking, obviously distressed."

"The woman was just thankful to be alive."

"These people were in a 1000 per cent worse state than other people who've made UFO reports to me."

"Something happened out there. Their car, even after being driven all that way still had black ash, or dust, over it. Even on the inside."

"There's no soil like that out there, only sand."

"Everyone else here in the station is pretty sceptical, but I'm keeping an open mind."

The Ceduna policeman said the truck driver who was originally followed by the object had driven on to Perth and reported the incident to the media, who alerted police.

They said the car had damage consistent with the

alleged incident — there were marks on the road and ash was found scattered around the area.

Sgt Furnell said the evidence suggested the family was being truthful.

The owner of the Mundrabilla Motor Hotel, Mrs Shirley London, said last night she had spoken to two truck drivers who were the first people to see the Knowles family after the incident.

She said the drivers were outside her hotel when she opened at 5 am.

"I know them only as Porky and Graham," she said.

"They said that this family had just driven off a few minutes earlier after they had failed to convince the woman driver to stop with them and have coffee."

"Porky told me that when the car drew in, the woman was crying almost uncontrollably and the three boys all seemed in a state of shock. He said one boy could hardly speak."

Mr Ray Brook of the UFO research centre in Adelaide is planning to interview the family.

Mr Brook said last night he had heard an interview with one family member and believed they had had an authentic experience.

SUN, VIC
21.1.1988

WITH no disrespect intended to flying saucers, little green men or egg-shaped spaceships zooming along the Eyre Highway, space engineer Matthew James today said we should not get too excited by all the talk of UFOs.

As police investigated claims by a Perth family that they were harassed by extraterrestrials as they drove across the Nullarbor, Mr James cautioned against the hysterical view.

"Certainly these are most interesting reports," he said. "Something obviously happened to these people."

"But on what we have heard so far, I would suggest we could be talking about ball lightning. It sounds like that sort of phenomenon."

Ball lightning?

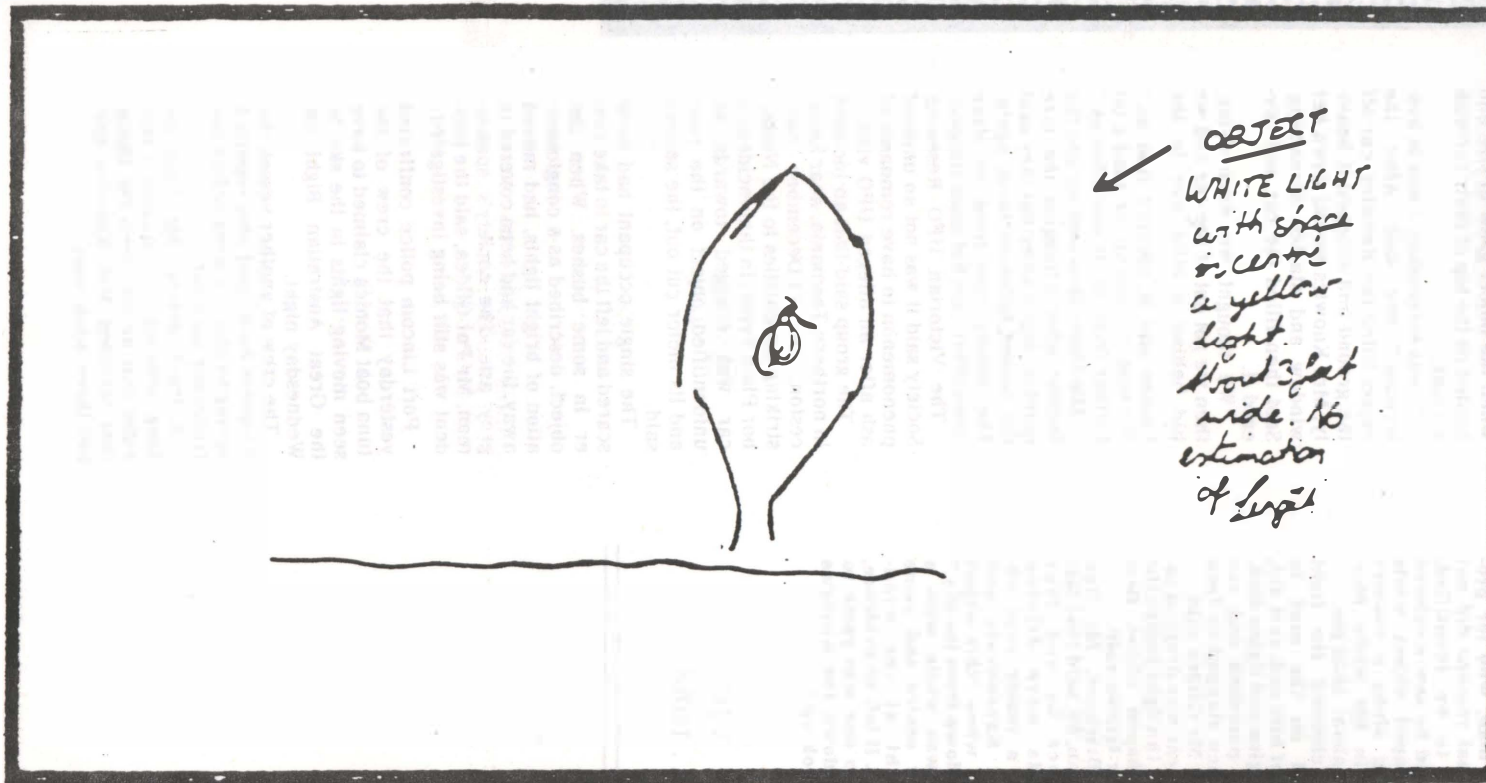
"It's literally a ball of light, a variation on normal lightning caused by electrical currents and magnetic fields

arranging themselves in a different manner."

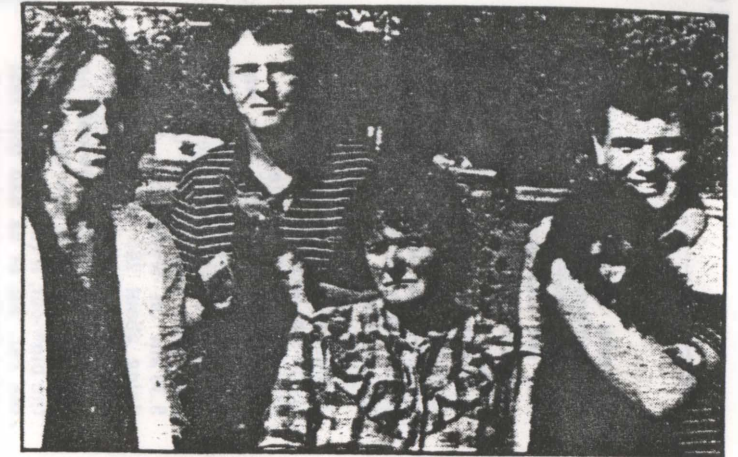
"It takes on a spherical shape, which could explain the reports that this was an egg-shaped object. It doesn't happen often, but it has been experienced in Australia and throughout the world."

Mr James, it should be said, is not a cynic. He is spokesman for the Melbourne Planetary Society, part of a worldwide scientific group which includes among its aims the

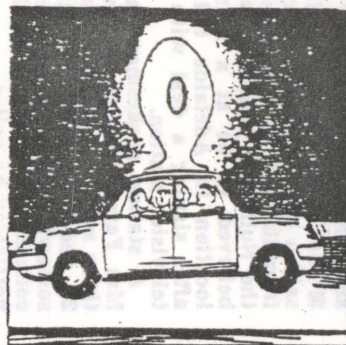
What happened out there on the Nullarbor?



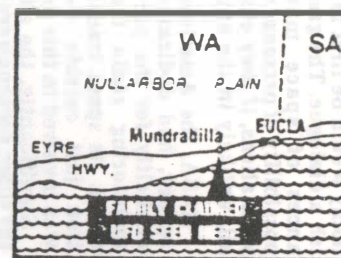
● Drawing by the Knowles family, given to police.



The Knowles family ... Patrick, Wayne, Faye and Sean.



An artist's sketch of the scene the Knowles family described.



● Mrs Knowles ... near hysterics after incident.



A damaged tyre from the Knowles family's car.

need to encourage further spending on research into extra-terrestrial life. Its founder is the eminent Canadian scientist and writer, Dr Carl Sagan. Its sponsors include Hollywood director Steven Spielberg.

Mr James is part of what might be called the serious scientific exploration of whether there is intelligent life elsewhere in the universe.

He is an aerospace consultant who works on government and private research programs. He is now writing a book on Australian space activities for the National Committee on Space Engineering.

He steers clear of Flash Gordon comics.

Mr James' view is that one day we may well establish contact with another world — but that we shouldn't expect extra-terrestrials to come knocking on our door, or, despite the reports coming from the Nullarbor, to terrorise motorists on desert highways.

"I enjoyed watching *E.T.*

just like everyone else," he said. "And I think we must keep an open mind on this question. In fact, I would hope to see some evidence of life elsewhere in my lifetime.

"But, in 99 per cent of cases, claims of extra-terrestrials cannot be substantiated with proper evidence. And those that do sound credible, where people experience strange sensations like those mentioned in the reports today, it doesn't necessarily imply that extra-terrestrial beings were involved."

Mr James said he would never dismiss UFO reports as fantasies.

Mr James said he believed if there was to be contact with other life in the universe, it was more likely radio astronomy would be first to establish a dialogue. The great distances of space made the possibility of personal contact with aliens, if they existed at all, unlikely in the extreme.

NASA, the American space agency, had dedicated funds explicitly for the purpose of monitoring radio traffic in space. Its space tracking station just outside Canberra was involved in this program.

Significantly, the efforts by the space superpowers had yet to achieve one positive result.

"Nevertheless, the search is continuing."

As to the visits of little green men? "Well, I have yet to see proof of it. Have you?"

■ The Perth family which said a UFO plucked their car from the road as they crossed the Nullarbor yesterday was believed to be at a secret location in Adelaide today after signing a deal with a television station.

A station spokesman said Mrs Faye Knowles and her three sons, Patrick, 24, Sean, 21, and Wayne, 18, were still somewhat shaken by their encounter which was being investigated by police.

HER, VIC
21.1.1988

Two more claim nasty encounter

A BRISBANE man claims he and a carload of friends had an experience similar to the Nullarbor "encounter".

And researchers in Melbourne believe the Knowles family's sighting may be linked to a Tasmanian UFO report.

Details of the December 14 sighting by a prominent Launceston businessman were given yesterday by the Victorian UFO Research Society.

"The object described is exactly the same," society officer Mr Pat Gildea said.

The man, who for professional reasons did not want to be identified, claimed he saw a colored egg-shaped object while driving along a country road in his white Mercedes about 10.30 pm.

He claimed the light landed on the road in front of him and, as it did, his engine and lights died.

"He panicked and ran but then stopped to look back," Mr Gildea said.

The car was dragged towards the light before the oval-shaped object flew off, Mr Gildea said.

In Brisbane, Mr Ron Warman, 56, said that last October he and four friends were driving along a lonely road between Sansonvale and Petrie when "this object came down from the sky."

"It was white with a yellow centre and came straight at the windscreen. It left no evidence, and no one was game to wind down the windows and look up."

SUN, VIC
22.1.1988

A Perth woman who claims an unidentified flying object landed on top of her car said last night that she and her three sons believed the object had been "after" them.

Mrs Faye Knowles, speaking on Channel 7, said she had initially mistaken the object, which emitted a "horrible humming noise" for a truck.

She said the encounter, on the Nullarbor Plain in Western Australia on Wednesday night, had lasted about 90 minutes.

Mr Sean Knowles, who was driving the family car at the time, said on Adelaide radio yesterday that after sighting the UFO at 5.30 am on Wednesday, "I was doing about 200 kilometres (an hour) to try and get away from it.

"Somehow, I got a blow-out," he said. "I don't know how. Once I got the blow-out, it (the UFO) was on the car. All of us had this real weird feeling going through us."

Mrs Knowles said she and her sons believed they were dying when the object grew in size and landed on the top of their car with a clunk.

"I was screaming, I was in hysterics," she said. After the object lifted the Knowles' car off the ground and dropped it heavily, Mrs Knowles wound down her window and started screaming. Soot then filled the car and covered it.

"We thought we were dying, then we got out of the car and we hid behind a little tree in the bushes and I couldn't find us," she said. "It was up the road a bit further from us. It was after us."

The object then took off and the family, after changing the tyre quickly, drove away but they said the object followed them again. The family had tried to wave down other cars but none stopped.

The Victorian UFO Research Society said it was not an unusual phenomenon to have remnants of ash after an alleged UFO visit.

The group said that an incident in northern Tasmania, near Launceston, on 14 December bore striking similarities to the Nullarbor Plain event. In that incident, a car was dragged towards an unidentified object on the road and its motor cut out, the society said.

The single occupant had been scared and left the car to take cover in some bushes. When the object, described as a conglomeration of bright lights, had moved away, the car had been covered in grey ash. The society's spokesman, Mr Pat Gildea, said the incident was still being investigated.

Port Lincoln police confirmed yesterday that the crew of the tuna boat *Monica* claimed to have seen moving lights in the sky in the Great Australian Bight on Wednesday night.

The crew of another vessel, the *Empress Lady*, had also reported seeing an object a week before the Nullarbor incident.

A truck driver, Mr John de Jong, also said on Channel 7 last night that he had seen the lights that terrified Mrs Knowles and her three adult sons.

What happened out there on the Nullarbor?



Mr Norman (left) and Mr Auchettl examining the car today

Meteorite 'not UFO answer'

By Carolyn Collins

A LEADING UFO researcher has dismissed claims that a meteorite "attacked" the Knowles family's car on the Nullarbor Plain.

Mr Paul Norman, vice president of the Victorian UFO Society, said these and other similar explanations were "hogwash".

"They watched it fly off - what sort of meteorite does that?" he said.

Mr Norman and fellow researcher Mr John Auchettl were in Adelaide to carry out a series of tests on the Knowles' car.

Although the encounter took place 12 days ago, the men were satisfied the results of their tests would reveal

evidence of a UFO encounter. The car has been impounded by Channel 7 since it arrived in Adelaide from Ceduna.

Mr Auchettl said the dents on the roof could not have been caused by the car rolling, as some reports have suggested.

"The probability of getting them so evenly spaced is very rare. It is not like someone has walked over it," he said.

The blown-out tyre was also "very unusual" because there were no signs

of wear and tear and it would be sent to its manufacturer for analysis.

The pair collected dust samples from inside the car and from the brake linings, and tested the car for radioactivity and changes to the its magnetic field.

Mrs Faye Knowles and her sons Patrick, 24, Sean, 21, and Wayne, 18, claimed their car was picked up by a bright white object near the WA-SA border on January 21.

They told police their car was covered with ash before being dropped, bursting a tyre.

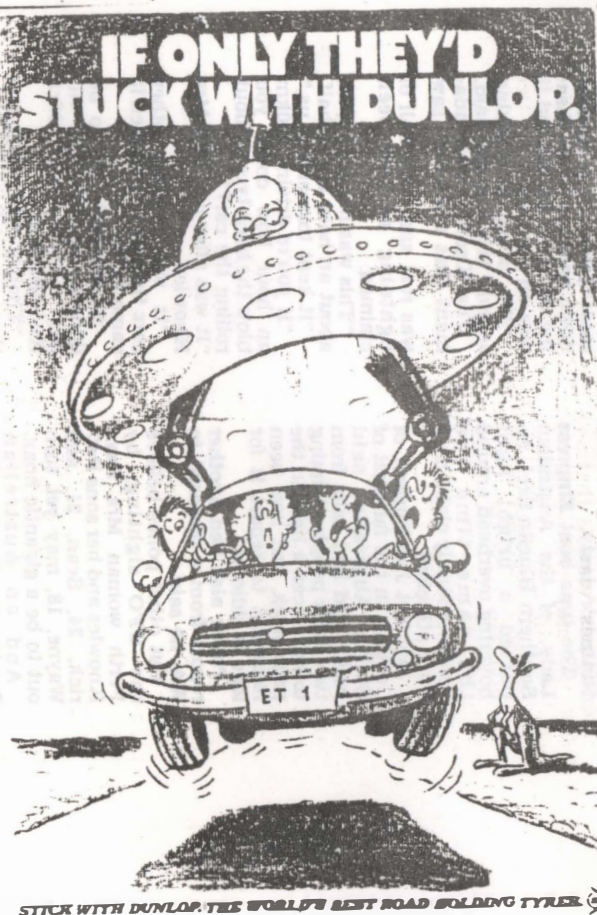
THE NEWS ADELAIDE, SA 1.2.1988



The driver of the family car, Mr Sean Knowles, 21, and his brother, Wayne, 18, in Adelaide yesterday.

THE AGE, Friday 22 January 1988

THE TRUTH, VIC 30.1.1988



MELBOURNE advertising company Campaign Palace was quick off the mark getting this advertisement into the national daily newspapers.

There were Australia-wide headlines on Thursday after a Perth family claimed a UFO picked their car up and took it while they were travelling across the Nullarbor on Wednesday.

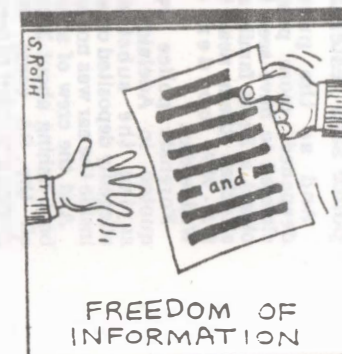
Copy writer Scott Whyhin mapped out the idea in the back of a cab after hearing a radio report and art director Grahame Smith produced the artwork almost as fast.

It took less than eight hours from conception to delivering the final artwork in Sydney by hand — and that included selling the idea to Dunlop and booking the newspaper space.

Asked if Dunlop had checked whether the vehicle wasn't already fitted with Dunlop tyres, Dunlop advertising manager Eric Billing commented that it probably was.

"It didn't leave the road," was his logic.

☆☆☆



DUST covering the car involved in the Nullarbor UFO "encounter" was an unknown substance, police said yesterday.

And as the puzzle deepened, more people claimed to have seen the object a Perth family say attacked them near the SA-WA border on Wednesday.

Forensic police were quoted in Adelaide as saying the substance allegedly deposited on and inside the car was not ash.

And the crew of a tuna boat fishing about 300km off the SA coast were among a number of people credited with independent sightings of a UFO matching the description of the Nullarbor nasty.

The tuna boat Empress Lady, of the Australian Southern Bluefin fleet, reported a bright light hovering overhead around the same time the Knowles family claim they were attacked.

And Sgt Jim Furnell, of Ceduna, in the far west of South Australia, said police had had calls from two other people claiming to have seen a light in the past week, but had been reluctant to report it for fear of ridicule.

Police also had another report from a motorist in WA, he said.

But other police believe the UFO sighting, by Perth woman Mrs Faye Knowles and her sons Patrick, 24, Sean, 21, and Wayne, 18, may yet turn out to be a gigantic hoax.

And an Australian Southern Bluefin fleet spokesman said details of the tuna boat sighting had been exaggerated.

Chief Insp Barry Wilmoughby, of Port Lincoln, said the desert sighting was in the same area of WA where the "Nullarbor Nymph" created a worldwide sensation some years ago.

Police at Eucla said they had been out on the highway but were unable to find the spot where the encounter allegedly happened.

But Mrs Faye Knowles and her three sons were still insisting last night that their experience on the Eyre Highway was real.

They told last night of how they endured nearly two hours of terror in a desperate bid to flee what they are convinced was a UFO.

Still recovering from what they claim was a horrifying encounter, the family appeared distressed and shaken in an exclusive interview on *Hitch at Seven*.

Mrs Knowles and her sons said their car was engulfed by a glowing ball and lifted into the air.

"We were in a state of shock," said Mrs Knowles. "All of a sudden this thing was on our roof and lifted the car up."

"I said I didn't know what to do and as soon as I said that this smoke stuff started coming into the car."

"It was like a soot ... coming in on top of us," she said.

"We thought we were dying, so we got out of the car and stood behind a little tree in the bushes."

"It couldn't find us but it was still there waiting for us and looking for us."

Mrs Knowles said she and her sons stayed in the bushes for about 15 minutes.

"Then all of a sudden it took off again and when we hopped in the car to take off it came after us again."

"It wouldn't leave us alone."

The Knowles said they were all awake when they noticed the UFO in the middle of the road, in front of their car, at about 5am.

"It was terrible," Mrs Knowles said.

Sean, who was driving, said: "I had to put my foot down because it was chasing us. The next second it was on the roof."

"We heard a clunking sound," Mrs Knowles said.

The Knowles were adamant that what they saw

was real and not a ball of lightning as has been claimed.

"This was happening for about an hour and a half."

"It kept tormenting us."

"If you're driving 200km an hour how could you blow the back tyre without rolling the car?"

"It was after us," said Mrs Knowles.

"It was chasing other cars then all of a sudden it came for us."

"Something's got to be done or else someone will get really hurt," Mrs Knowles said.

"There's something out there we can't explain."

They are to get the train back to Perth.

AGE, VIC

22.1.1988

IN America, they're excited. In Australia, they're more cautious — even sceptical.

But whatever it was that the Knowles family saw out on the Nullarbor early on Wednesday morning, it has grabbed the attention — and aroused the envy — of researchers around the world.

Some even say the "Mundrabilla Incident" — as police now call the family's strange encounter — the most important sighting ever.

"I can't think of any other case like it," said George Eberhart, from the Chicago-based J.L. Hynek Centre for UFO Studies.

"It's incredible."

"There have been other reports where vehicles have been interfered with — like the ignition systems — but nothing like this. I wish a case like this had happened here."

The Hynek Centre — named after a UFO researcher who once served as an astronomical consultant to the official US Air Force investigation into UFOs — receives about 250 reported sightings each year from throughout the US.

Bodies

Eberhart said the best-documented case on record of a close encounter of the second kind — actual physical evidence — was a 1971 incident in Delthof, Kansas.

In that case, after a sighting by a 16-year-old boy, Ronald Johnson, scientists found a ring-shaped mark in the grass and a residue of a silvery-type of salt which was not found naturally.

But, Eberhart said, the Knowles sighting could be of even greater importance.

At home in Australia, theories about what caused the Knowles family's night of terror have begun flying around like UFOs.

Explanations include a close encounter with dry lightning or a direct hit from a carbonaceous meteorite.

Another theorist has suggested the object might have been nothing more sinister than a distorted view of the rising sun.

Faye Knowles and her three sons, are adamant the dazzling giant egg-in-

an-eggcup-like object which landed on their car on the Eyre Highway in the early hours of Wednesday was extraterrestrial.

They claim the smell of dead bodies, the coating of ash and dents on the roof of their car all point to something not of this world.

And research physicist Glen Moore of Wollongong University agrees.

But instead of a UFO, he believes each of the individual phenomena and the sighting of a bright object reported by tuna fishermen in the Great Australian Bight adds up to a carbonaceous meteorite.

"I see no difficulty with what they saw, only with the interpretation of what it was," said Mr Moore.

"There's the possibility of these people feeling a very considerable shock if the meteorite entered the earth's atmosphere above them."

"It's quite possible the meteorite broke up in the atmosphere and material from it fell on the car."

However, Professor Peter Schwerdtfeger, head of meteorology at Adelaide's Flinders University, thinks a severe electrical storm could also fit the bill.

"My best guess is that it's an atmospheric electrical phenomenon manifested in the form of dry lightning — in other words there was no rain."

"If somebody happens to be in one of these electrical disturbances miles from anywhere, it's going to be a pretty thrilling if not eerie sensation."

Allan Brunt, former head of the South Australian Bureau of Meteorology

What happened out there on the Nullarbor?

gy, has another idea — an extremely distorted view of the rising sun.

He said conditions on the day were perfect for far horizon mirages and what happened following the sighting could probably be explained by panic.

Mr Brunt thought it possible Mrs Knowles turned her car over without really knowing what had happened, landing back on the wheels.

"I'll go and jump in the lake if that dust they found on the car turns out to be some sort of extra-terrestrial material," he said.

Mr Brunt will have to wait however, because police said it could be at least another week before forensic experts analysed the substance.

SUN, VIC
23.1.1988

High-speed Telstar

In regard to the recent Nullarbor visit of our intergalactical neighbors please show me a Ford Telstar sedan capable of 200 kmh.

Gerard Tobin,
Mooroolbark.

AGE, VIC
23.1.1988

After Wednesday's alleged extra-terrestrial attack on four travellers on the lonely Eyre outside the tiny town, local publican Steve Papuptis said yesterday he had seen strange lights over Eucla on January 5.

When pilots flying light planes between Adelaide and Perth stop over at Eucla, Mr Papuptis goes to the airstrip to take them back to his Amber Hotel.

A booking was made for a pilot to stay on January 5, but when he didn't turn up at the airstrip at 7 pm as expected, Mr Papuptis went home.

Later that night Mr Papuptis's wife said she could see a plane coming in, so he thought his guest had arrived.

"I saw what looked like navigation lights moving over the west of the town towards the airstrip," Mr Papuptis said.

"The lights came slowly down like a plane preparing to land ... but then hovered at a 20-

degree angle for about a minute.

"I thought what the hell is the pilot doing."

Mr Papuptis, who has spent 20 years at Eucla, said the lights moved lower, then slowly east before vanishing over the horizon.

He reported the incident to police because he feared the plane might have crashed.

On police advice he also reported it to air traffic control in Perth, who checked with Adelaide airport.

"They said no plane was supposed to be in the area," Mr Papuptis said.

He said he was mystified by the incident until last week's claim by Perth woman Faye Knowles that she and her three sons were chased by a huge "bright glowing" object as they drove near the WA-SA border town.

Mr Papuptis said the lights he saw "were two twinkling white lights on top of an ultra-violet light, but I didn't bother to look at its shape".

He can't remember whether he heard the sound of a plane because

"when I saw the lights I thought it was a plane anyway and there was an east wind blowing at the rate of about 15 knots".

But he doesn't believe in flying saucers.

"I had seen light streaks from Skylab and I think maybe what I saw in January was some part of a rocket," he said.

Another Eucla resident, 28-year-old cook Jeanette Dodd, isn't so sure about what she saw in the sky.

Her house is on a hill with a commanding view of the Southern Ocean.

"About a month ago we were in bed looking at the stars and this bright light was coming towards us," said Ms Dodd.

"It sort of flew into the angle of the window and then zoomed away.

"It was very big and must have been travelling at incredible speed.

"It hovered above the horizon on a 30-degree angle, so I knew it wasn't a boat ... and then it disappeared."

Another local with a strange tale is bar manager Stan Mossdeld, who said: "I was going home from Border Village about 10 days ago and as I was coming towards our place I saw this great big light hanging up in the air.

"It was then for about 5 km and then when we rounded a bend it was gone. I was scary."

Mr Mossdeld believes the various sightings add up to visitors from space.

"Most people in town think something is occurring and I think these creatures from outer space are ready to communicate with us," he said.

SUNDAY PRESS, VIC
24.1.1988

I NEVER intended to tell anyone this. I was not keen to be thought of as crazy and there was no way I could have avoided that by claiming to have had an encounter of "that kind".

However, now that the Knowles have made their encounter public and others claiming to have had similar experiences have come out of the woodwork, I might as well get in on the act...

Was it really a UFO that my companion and I saw on the Eyre Highway in Western Australia all those years ago?

It happened when I was working in Kalgoorlie. At that time we received regular reports of motorists on the highway seeing strange lights. We ran the stories, but always had a little chuckle about another sighting of little green men on the Nullarbor.

In those days, sighting UFOs was not as acceptable as it has become today. Such reports were treated with glee and greeted with comments like: "Where did you see it? In the car park at the pub?"

Well, there was no way I was going to cop that sort of flak. Besides, it could have been embarrassing to both my companion and myself.

Anyway, I was on an assignment out past Balladonia on the highway and was returning to Kalgoorlie. It was dark so we had

Suddenly this big, bright light appeared on the horizon in front of us. We thought it was a truck, so moved over because he seemed to be hogging the middle of the road.

The light approached at about the speed a truck would. As he got closer I cursed him for not dipping his lights and gave him a blast of full beam just to remind him.

It had no affect. He just kept on coming with that light blinding us. I slowed right down and waited for him to pass.

What happened out there on the Nullarbor?

When the light came to within about 100 metres of us everything zapped out. The car lights and radio went off and the engine stopped.

The light slowed and made a couple of slow passes over us. In no time at all we were perspiring profusely and the metal of the car was hot to touch. It was like an oven in there.

We could not get out because this was in the days before the highway was sealed. There was dust and dirt swirling around like a storm; we would have choked to death on it.

We could do nothing but just sit and watch the light make the passes over us. We could see nothing but the light and we could hear nothing but a sound like a vacuum cleaner.

My companion grabbed at my arm. "What's going on, what's happening?" she asked.

"What is that thing and what's it doing to us?" she asked again, a tremor in her voice.

I was too curious to be scared, but I was rattled by the experience. It was weird.

The whole incident lasted only a few minutes and then the light turned and took off at a great rate of knots in the direction in which it had been headed.

When the dust settled we got out, legs trembling. We sat in the middle of the road while we recovered. There was no sign of the mysterious light. It had been a nerve-racking experience.

When the "thing" disappeared, the lights and radio in our car came back on and I was able to start the engine again with no problems. The car cooled quickly.

So there it is.

However, before you go calling the men in the white coats I must say that, no, we had not been drinking — nor were we hallucinating.

My natural journalistic scepticism would tend to discount the experience as a lot of rubbish. Except that I was there and I know it happened.

So what did happen? What were those little green men up to? Why did they pick on us?

Were they just checking us out or were they looking for some intelligent life form to take away with them for study? Perhaps we were unsuitable candidates.

What an experience that would have been, to be whisked away into space. What a story! Any time you want me folks, just come and get me.

SUNDAY MAIL, QLD
24.1.1988
CR: ROY RUSSELL

A MELBOURNE doctor yesterday treated three members of the family which last week claimed it was attacked by a UFO.

Mrs Faye Knowles and sons Patrick, 24, and Wayne, 18, yesterday were taken to Dandenong Valley Private Hospital by relatives who were concerned about their condition.

The doctor who treated them said: "They're fine but that's about all I'm prepared to say."

The Knowles were discharged yesterday afternoon and last night were spending time with family and friends.

A relative, who asked not to be named, said the doctor had given them each a cup of coffee and had counselled them to "take it easy".

"They were told it could last anything between two weeks to six months to get over what they've been through," the relative said.

Mrs Knowles last night hit out at the TV station which paid for exclusive rights to the bizarre story about a UFO attack on the family car near Mundrabilla on the Nullarbor plain.

This follows scientific tests showing the car had no signs of a close encounter of an unearthly kind.

An angry Mrs Knowles declared her disgust with the tests which were done on behalf of Channel 7 in Adelaide.

"They're calling us liars," she said in an interview shown on Channel 7, adding: "That's not true. What we know happened to us did happen to us. There's definitely something out there."

Mrs Knowles and her sons Patrick, Sean and Wayne were sticking to their story that a UFO chased their appropriately-named blue Ford Telstar along the Eyre Highway early last Wednesday.

Media coverage of the "Mundrabilla incident" has captured the imaginations of overseas UFO watchers.

"I can't think of any other case like it," said George Eberhart, from the Chicago-based J.L.Hynek Centre for UFO studies. "It's incredible."

The Knowles claim that the object — likened to a large glowing egg in a cup — picked up their car and slammed it back on the road, blowing a tyre.

Their car was covered with a film of black dust and was dented on the roof.

However, tests commissioned by Channel 7 found there was no evidence to support the claim that the UFO landed and dented the roof, or had been responsible for the damaged tyre.

Mr Monty Luke, from Australian Mineral Development Laboratories, tested the vehicle yesterday and on Friday.

He said the dust was consistent with material from brake linings and was consistent with similar material found on other vehicles.

Results of police tests won't be known till the end of this week.

The Knowles have been contracted to Channel 7 for a sum believed to be \$5000. It is understood the terms of the contract prevent them speaking with other media for three months.

The reporter who compiled the story was Channel 7 Adelaide's chief-of-staff Frank Pangallo.

"Nobody's really disputing that they didn't see anything," Mr Pangallo said yesterday. "It's just that nothing hit the car."

Mr Pangallo said some dents found on the car were old and consistent with wear and tear. There were two dents on the roof and some on the side of the car. Two dents were fairly recent.

Mr Pangallo said geiger counters had been used in the tests but no trace of radioactivity had been found.

Asked about Faye Knowles' angry reaction to the Channel 7 tests, Mr Pangallo said: "I've spent a bloody hour trying to explain to them they're not being made out to be liars. I just said to them 'look you just got it confused'."

"The smoke in the car was caused by your burst tyre. It wasn't this UFO. There's nothing saying you didn't see a UFO because it has been witnessed by other people on the road."

"Independent witnesses have seen it and it was seen again the following night. And it also buzzed a tuna trawler at Port Lincoln on the Wednesday night."

"So it's not that they're being made out to be liars. They were genuinely distressed at seeing something."

Mr Pangallo also defended the Channel 7 contract which prevented the Knowles from discussing the story with any other media group.

"There was some commercial interest but it was a drop in the ocean compared with the fistful of dollars the Mike Willesee team were waving around the Eyre Peninsula and the Nullarbor," he said. "They were going as high as \$20,000."

Mr Pangallo described how he had "stitched up" the Seven exclusive.

He said he was the first reporter on the scene and arranged for the Knowles car to be hidden on a property in Wudinna on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula.

"There were film crews and journalists from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth scouring the town trying to find it," he said.

Mr Pangallo said the initial tip-off came from police on Wednesday night.

"When we got the tip from the cops that this was happening I just rang the Ceduna police, found out what time the family had left and ascertained about what time they would be passing through Wudinna," he said.

Mr Pangallo's next move was to contact a former journalist colleague,

Mr Paul Jackson, who runs the Eyre Highway Motel at Wudinna.

"I got him to sit out there on a box of Eskies and just wait until they came. He flagged them down, took them inside and by that time we were on our way in a fixed-wing plane," he said.

"And we got there about three hours before anyone else."

Mr Pangallo was asked whether he was concerned about the use of cheque book journalism.

"Mate, as far as cheque book journalism is concerned, I just don't want to hear anything about it because everybody does it," he replied.

"But make it quite clear it wasn't an outrageous figure. And the only reason we had to do something was because the Willesee team was telegraphing their offer in advance on the phone."

"They were still a day away. They were ringing through. It was almost like being at Christie's. You know, like the bids are coming up."

"I can honestly tell you we would have got the story. That family weren't looking for money."

Why were they offered it?

"Well we just wanted it exclusively. We didn't want the Nine network to just take it away."

He added: "It was just one of those stories that isn't itself a situation of exclusivity."

SUNDAY OBSERVER
VIC
24.1.1988

Backing for UFO claims

CLAIMS by a family of four that they were attacked by a UFO on the Nullarbor plain have been backed by a researcher.

SUNDAY PRESS
VIC
24.1.1988

What happened out there on the Nullarbor?

THE UFO THAT CAN'T BE EXPLAINED

For nearly an hour, a huge, unrecognizable something, performing amazing maneuvers, followed JAL Flight No. 1628 over Alaska. Veteran pilots saw it. Three different radar scopes tracked it. And once it disappeared, it still wasn't gone...

flying saucers of supermarket tabloids. Those who show interest risk being labeled as true-believers in visitors from outer space, intellectual flyweights, or just birdbrains with plenty of room upstairs to rent. To avoid ridicule, most serious researchers have retreated to the shadows and kept their mouths shut about what could be going on in the seemingly infinite universe.

Capt. Terauchi probably would have been wiser to do that: he could have spared himself the phone calls, the rubbernecking, the mockery. But by all accounts he is an honest and forthright man. By doing his duty, by reporting in good conscience something in the sky that wasn't supposed to be there, he brought public controversy upon himself and embarrassing scrutiny within a profession that is highly conscious of image.

The FAA, meanwhile, did not want to encourage public hysteria by cavalierly releasing information whose meaning it could not ascertain. It also did not want to cast aspersions on the crew — it had no reason to — or create the impression that it had anything to cover up, because it didn't. The FAA just didn't know.

It was a lose-lose situation.

THE AIR FORCE HAD spent 22 maddening years investigating UFO reports before closing down the last government watchdog, Project Blue Book — and the FAA had no interest in picking up where the retreating Air Force had left off. The UFO issue had lent itself too readily to fantasy and hoax; it was impossible to control. Its history had been protracted, complicated and attended to by myriad panels and projects that passed the hot potato around without settling anything — a scenario laid out in *The UFO Controversy in America*, a 1976 book by Temple University professor David Michael Jacobs.

Ground control: Do you still have the traffic? JAL: Affirmative. Nine o'clock.

Project Blue Book had been preceded by Project Sign, Project Grudge, Project Twinkle, with the high point of Air Force involvement occurring in 1952. There had been a tremendous number of UFO reports that year — including radar scope sightings, later deemed inaccurate, that led the Air Force to scramble jets to intercept UFOs above the nation's capital. So the CIA convened a panel of five distinguished nonmilitary scientists — the Robertson Panel — to examine whether the sightings threatened national security. After 12 hours of study over three days, the panel concluded that the real danger didn't seem to be the UFOs. The real danger was the UFO reports — seemingly more credible because of the Air Force's sustained interest — reports that could expose the public to "psychological warfare" and "skillful hostile propaganda" that might "induce hysterical behavior and harmful distrust of duly constituted authority." The Russians would surely get us.

Informed critics argued that the government was going about the investigation all wrong, that investigators were preoccupied with the potential threat to national security — this was the '50s, after all, the height of the Cold War — and not with serious scientific analyses of the thousands of cases from all over the world.

But no matter what the Air Force people did, certain UFO quarters routinely suspected them of orchestrating elaborate cover-ups.

The flying-saucer business was the biggest public-relations headache in Air Force history. Finally, the Condon Committee, an academic group convened in 1966 to come up with a nonmilitary read on the situation, said exactly what the Air Force wanted to hear — knowledge wouldn't be advanced by further study, and Project Blue Book should be put to sleep.

It was, in 1969, and the assassination of UFOs passed into the hands of independent researchers and private organizations such as MUFON and CUFOs — the Mutual UFO Network based in Seguin, Texas, and the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies in Glenview, Ill. The vanguard of current research centers on increasing reports of abductions that involve traumatic medical examinations on members of different generations of the same families — hair-thin needles insert-

ed up the nose, plugs of skin taken from backs, arms, legs.

No — the FAA had no interest in arousing history's tendency to repeat itself. The government had learned its lesson well: The emotional, ungainly issues related to unidentified flying objects were in no way conducive to bureaucratic control.

SO NOW YOU SEE WHAT the captain and the FAA had gotten themselves into. Dozens of times, day after day, the phone rang in Paul Steucke's office. NRC in New York. Radio Hawaii. Star Magazine. Canadian Broadcasting. The Sunday London Mirror. The French News Agency. The Washington office of TRUD, the Soviet National Daily Newspaper. National Public Radio. People magazine.

Public response was so great that the FAA decided to interview the JAL crew a second time and review the radar tapes. And Steucke started thinking strategy. What was the FAA's role and responsibility? What did it know?

The first officer and the flight engineer again corroborated the captain's dramatic report. But the FAA decided that the radar tapes did not — necessarily. The object on radar was now thought to be an accidental split image of the JAL 747, Steucke said, and not a separate object — a familiar radar quirk. The people at Elmendorf, meanwhile, emphasized that their radar signals hadn't lasted long enough to be confirmed, and they attributed the apparent hits to coincidental electronic clutter.

The calls kept coming. Steucke kept getting new bits of material, and the thread of the story kept wandering. He felt as if he were "blowing up a balloon" — each time he doled out a bit of information, the story got bigger. He was constantly looking for holes in the data and trying to stay ahead of the reporters — not always with success.

Hal Bernton, for one, of the Anchorage Daily News.

After the FAA explained its double radar signal as a "split beacon," Bernton tracked down controller Sam Rich, who told him that three controllers had seen a radar image of an object near 1628 that night, and "all three of us thought there was a track," or aircraft. (That would be Rich, Henley and John Aarnink, who had stepped in to help out.) The track may not have been very strong, Rich told Bernton, but none of the controllers at the time thought it might be a split image of the 747.

Steucke called Rich in for a chat. He made Rich aware of the awkward position he had put the other controllers in — speaking for them without their knowledge. And from then on, Rich referred interview requests to Steucke's office, where reporters were informed that Rich didn't want to talk. A message also went out over the FAA employees' "cords a phones" at work, warning that reporters would hound them on this story and that FAA policy required them to go through public affairs.

Steucke worried that this mix-up made him look bad. One day he's saying only one controller had handled 1628, and now he finds out there were five, counting supervisors, and they seemed to be disputing the FAA's publicly stated position! What in the world was everybody going to think?

At least he wasn't handling an air crash. The subject matter was fascinating, and things kept happening. Early on Jan. 11, for instance, Capt. Terauchi again reported seeing unusual lights while flying over Alaska. Once he landed and learned the location of a reported temperature inversion, he provided an explanation: As he flew near Arctic Village, the town lights had gotten distorted by bouncing off ice or stale created when cold air got sandwiched between two layers of warm air. Not a rare phenomenon. But, initially, the information was presented as if the FAA had come up with the explanation. Terauchi complained to reporter Hal Bernton, aware that it made him look like a crackpot.

Hank Elias, the Alaska air-traffic manager, felt bad for the

captain. A pilot is always seeing things in the sky, he says, because that's where he's looking all the time. "You see things," he says, "and you rationalize." That's a star, that's another airplane, that's a navigational beacon. So the captain sees something, and it doesn't look like anything he's seen in 29 years of flying. Then, says Elias, he's "got to look at everything else real critical from now on... the poor guy's got to take a real hard look and say, 'Is that another one?'"

Inside the FAA office, meanwhile, the attitude was, *I can't believe it. What is all this interest?* But the sighting also generated wonder: For all anyone knew, the United States or the Soviet Union was testing some advanced experimental craft — what better place? Or maybe there was a physical explanation, beyond our current awareness, as meteorites once were, and radioactivity, atomic fission, the anomalous motion of the perihelion of Mercury. And was it likely that in all the vast universe, only Earth would be singled out for life?

"We all carry with us the seed of the possibility that what Capt. Terauchi described could actually have been there," says Steucke. "The debunkers are trying to keep us honest. At the same time,

Every time the public affairs guy doled out information, the story ballooned.

the believers are trying to keep the possibility alive."

THE INQUIRIES KEPT COMING — mostly from the media and some from independent UFO investigators like Richard Haines, a compact, precise, polite California scientist in wire-rimmed bifocals who still pulls out chairs for women. When people called Steucke with scientific questions, or wanting to know about other pilot sightings, he sent them to Haines.

During the day, Haines works at NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View as chief of the Space Human Factors Office — they're helping design the interior of the space station as well as new space suits. At night and on weekends, at his own expense, he tries to keep track of and explain high-altitude sightings like Capt. Terauchi's — his hobby for 20 years.

He thinks pilots make good subjects: highly stable, highly trained, highly motivated, scientifically inclined, and unlikely to make casual reports of strange sightings, because of the potential to be embarrassed among their peers. Plus, an airplane comes with instruments that can record phenomena — "a flying laboratory," says Haines.

Over the years he has looked into 3,000 pilot-sightings and explained 2,500 of them as illusions or misidentifications of atmospheric phenomena. "But nonetheless," he says, "I have quite a few that are very unexplained. I would say 600." The Alaska sighting is one of them — but he says the only really unusual thing about it was the publicity. "People tend not to know about the others."

Like the dozen or so UFOs that six Brazilian jet fighters chased for half an hour last May after the objects registered on radar in Sao Paulo. Or the young Australian pilot Haines has just written a book about — who in 1978 reported a strange craft in his vicinity, then disappeared, while flying in a Cessna to buy some crayfish for a party.

Haines heard about the JAL sighting and proceeded to educate himself about the relevant radar systems and the dynamics of the Boeing 747. He got hold of wind aloft charts and weather photography. He worked the phones: Elmendorf, Steucke, Derry, JAL, the pilot and first officer of the United jet. And he interviewed Capt. Terauchi for three hours by telephone with the

help of a Japanese friend who is a pilot with a Ph.D. in engineering.

When Haines asked Terauchi how the two objects he first saw had moved in space, the captain said, "They move together as if they have a common center of gravity, and they oscillate slightly with a random wavelike motion." The instant he flashed his landing lights at the United jet, whatever was following him disappeared. "Whaddya mean, disappeared?" Haines asked. And Terauchi said:

"The lights went out."

IT WAS SOMETIME AFTER Haines spoke with the captain that Philip Klass, another noted independent UFO investigator, advanced a widely published theory that the captain had actually been looking at Jupiter, and maybe Mars.

It was late in January by then. For many years, until his semi-retirement last June, Klass had been the senior avionics editor of *Astronomy* and *Space Technology* magazines. And for more than 20 years, his hobby has been to investigate "seemingly mysterious or famous UFO cases," he says.

"I have emerged — it sounds immodest, but I think it's true — as probably the leading skeptical UFO investigator in the country, if not the world," he says. "After 21 years, I have yet to find a case that I did not believe could be explained in prosaic or earthly terms. Because of this position, if there is an important new UFO case, I cannot afford to ignore it, if you will. It's sort of as if Sherlock Holmes was a real person living today, he couldn't afford to ignore Jimmy Hoffa's complete disappearance or other such seemingly mysterious crimes."

Klass didn't interview the pilot, because after hearing him on Larry King's late-night radio show, he says, "it was evident that he is not too skilled in English, and I don't speak Japanese." But his FAA contacts enabled him to "read and make extensive notes" of a transcript of the taped conversation between the cockpit and the ground. Then he approximated the southeasterly direction in which the captain and crew were looking, consulted "a professional astronomer," and worked out a theory.

Jupiter was extremely bright and visible in the direction of the reported UFO, and Mars was just below and to the right of Jupiter, which could explain the pilot's initial report of two lights.

"Jupiter was only 10 degrees above the horizon, making it appear to the pilot to be roughly at his own 35,000 foot altitude," Klass wrote in a report for the Buffalo-based Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, of which he is a founder.

HAINES COULDN'T buy the theory. It focused only on the very end of the 50-minute episode, and did not take the crew's entire experience into account.

"There's no way it could be a planet," he says. "The autopilot was flying the airplane in a straight line. Terauchi tells me that the object first appeared at 12 o'clock, then moved out rather quickly to 10 o'clock or 10:30 before it came back again."

That's not Jupiter, he says, because Jupiter doesn't move. "If the airplane is stable... and Jupiter is stable, it doesn't explain this business" of the objects moving back and forth. Besides, he says, the objects were way too big to be planets.

When the story about Klass' Jupiter theory came over the wire at the Anchorage Daily News, Hal Bernton called up Terauchi. The pilot was adamant — he had recognized Jupiter during the flight, and whatever had tailed him was no planet.

Klass laughed when told that the pilot had rejected his explanation: "This is per for the course. When a person is a dedicated UFO believer, as the pilot is and was, he'll always deny a prosaic explanation. You know, of course, that he's a UFO repeater."

Klass was referring to the captain's second interview with the

FAA. When asked if the Nov. 17 sighting was the captain's "first experience," the captain told of two other occasions. Once, from his home, he had observed bright lights for 10 minutes at what he judged to be 10,000 feet. And five years ago, on a cargo flight south of Formosa, "when we start climb we saw left-hand side big mother-ship." But he said it was too "weird," he wasn't feeling well, and he ignored it.

Asked to comment on these remarks, Steucke said, "The fact that he saw a couple of other things, I think, is outweighed by the balance of the fact that he's a captain for a large airline and has flown for a long time and has a great deal of responsibility."

AT A CERTAIN POINT, THE FAA decided not to release any more information until all the material had been gathered and scrutinized. While the lid was on, Elias, the air-traffic manager, hand-carried the radar disc pack to Washington and picked up Harvey Saffer, the FAA's director of Air Traffic Evaluations and Analysis. Their mission was to take a final good look at the radar returns, with the help of the staff at the FAA Technical Center in Atlantic City. The computer there could regenerate the signals into a pattern by stringing them together like pearls.

They looked and looked and looked at it. They played the radar tapes, trying to re-create the actual scenario. Five times they looked at it.

"We come to the conclusion," says Elias, "that, uh, you know... we can't confirm nor deny. If the [crew] had never said anything, we would have said, 'We see that every day.' It would have been passed off as a split beacon or 'unrelated target.'"

This occurs when the signal coming off the skin of the airplane and the signal coming out of the airplane's transponder don't hit the ground at exactly the same moment. "It's just like an echo," says Elias. On the radar scope, it looks like a little dot next to the slash that represents the airplane. Elias noticed one odd thing: The dots jumped around in relation to the slash. It wasn't unheard of, but it wasn't usual either.

What may have caused the split beacon was not determined. But both Steucke and Elias agreed that the coincidence was extraordinary — a crew reporting something outside their window and on their cockpit radar, at the same time that both the military and the FAA were receiving intermittent radar signals in the plane's vicinity. Steucke passed off the synchronicity of events as "ironic."

Says Elias: "You can't be absolutely primitive. That's an honest answer... The FAA is not saying it positively, absolutely, without a shadow of a doubt, is a split beacon... We neither confirm nor deny."

Elias returned to Alaska with his inconclusive results. "The Admiral," FAA administrator Donald Engen, an old jet pilot, wanted to be kept abreast of what was what, so Elias and the controller briefed him by phone. And someone on Harvey Saffer's staff briefed the presidential science adviser.

BY THIS TIME, ALL THE MATERIALS related to the Nov. 17 sighting were trickling into Paul Steucke's office from half a dozen different places, and he scheduled a news conference for March 5 in Anchorage.

He also drew up an extraordinary order form of materials related to the sighting — Terauchi's narrative report, for instance (\$1,100), or tapes of conversations between ground con-

The pilot was adamant — whatever had tailed him was no planet.

trol and the JAL (\$50), or

inacurtable 8-by-10 glossy blow-ups of radar signals (\$10). The deluxe package cost \$194.30 — the ultimate inside look at this increasingly bizarre little incident. A story about it ran over the wires.

There were hundreds of requests for various parts of the package. More than a few wanted the whole thing. And everybody wanted it right away.

THE FULL AND FINAL news conference that was intended to kill this story once and for all was an anticlimactic event at which the FAA released two pounds of documents and no conclusions. It took place in a spacious room with an American flag in a corner, and unfathomable diagrams of airplanes and radar signals up on the white boards that lined the room.

Steucke was the only FAA person available to answer questions. He had called up the Air Force people, and "they told me three things to say": Their radar signal was clutter, there was no scramble, and there is no investigation. And none of the FAA's technical people would be there to answer questions, he said, because, "frankly, they're gun-shy as hell about it."

Resides, the FAA was not in the UFO business, would not be in the UFO business in the future, and did not intend to conduct a scientific investigation, he said. "We pursued this from what I would call an operational systems view. . . . We were out to determine if there was another aircraft there, which we were not able to do one way or the other."

He did mention a couple of other unusual, far less-dramatic pilot sightings above Alaska, but the bottom line on this one was that the safety of the air traffic control system had not been compromised — case closed.

EPILOGUE

RICHARD HAINES HAS moved on to other sightings by pilots. The Alaska sighting "will go down as a good case," he says. "Not the best. But a good solid case" for which "there is no logical explanation." But he's afraid the publicity it generated will discourage pilots from reporting unusual phenomena — if they realize that whatever they tell ground control could be turned over to the American public, for a fee.

Back in February he received a post card from Capt. Terauchi, who apologized for not answering Haines' follow-up letters. "Sorry for the delay," the captain wrote, "but things are getting hot" — don't call me, I'll call you.

Erland Stephenson, the shift supervisor in the control room the night of the sighting, has had some medical problems and is on sick leave. He says that if he had been in Capt. Terauchi's position, he would have kept his mouth shut, or told what he had to tell as a humorous story.

Carl Henley, who handled the JAL flight that night, wants you to know he's just an air traffic controller who likes his job. He'd like to talk to Capt. Terauchi one day — he feels they've been through something together — and find out whether there was anything he could have done for the pilot that he didn't do.

Paul Steucke and his wife went out to dinner to celebrate on the night of the final news conference. Life was good. Two galleries in Alaska were carrying his artwork, he was flirting with a third in Honolulu, and he was about to be named a federal employee of the year in a competition involving 30 U.S. agencies in the Anchorage area.

And Capt. Kenju Terauchi, the veteran pilot who did his duty and reported what he saw, has moved back to Tokyo after three years in Anchorage, where he had liked to fish for red and silver salmon. The easy speculation is that he decided to distance himself from an event that had caused him more harm than good. But JAL insists the move was a routine rotation. The captain left instructions with the airline to tell anyone who calls that he stands by his account — and does not wish to give it again. Anchorage Daily News reporter Hal Bernton was left with the impression that Terauchi felt he got hung out to dry. The pilot grew more reticent with each conversation; he seemed frustrated. But he remained convinced that Flight No. 1628 had indeed encountered something highly advanced technologically, and unlikely to have originated on Earth.

"I can't understand the technology," he told Bernton, "but it was not dangerous."

If there is a next time Terauchi said, he might try blinking his wing lights four times, then twice more — "Hi" in Morse code. And perhaps one day, someone else will see what he saw, he said, and his controversial experience will take on new meaning.

"I think," said the captain, "we have to keep this record." □

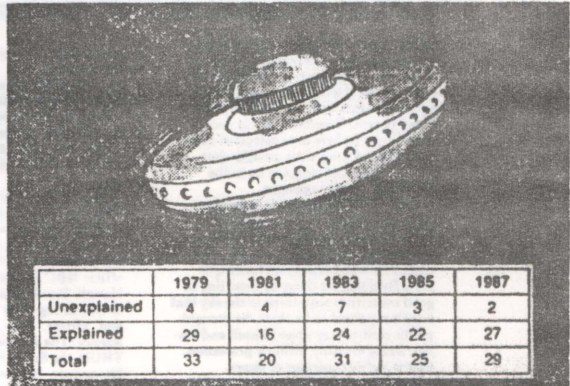
MARGUERITE DEL GIUDICE is an Inquirer staff writer.

S N A P S H O T

A STATISTICAL LOOK AT LIFE IN MELBOURNE

UFO sightings

Within 50 km's of Melbourne



NB: Approximately 60% of UFO sightings are immediately explained and unrecorded
Source: Victorian UFO Research Society

AN APOLOGY: The quality of this press article is not the best and its print size is very small, we have little control over our material as we get it from the USA. We felt that with all these problem, the report was still worth re-producing.

P R E W A R N I N G

AS OF THE 1st JANUARY 1988, THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP HAS NOW GONE UP BY \$1 AUSTRALIAN AND \$1 U.S. THE FIRST RISE FOR THREE LONG YEARS.
(SEE EDITORIAL PAGE FOR THE NEW LEVELS)

DISCUSSION NIGHT

For your Diary

6th JUNE 88 MEETING
5th SEPT 88 MEETING
5th DEC 88 A.G.M.

TIME : 8:00pm
WHERE : 'The Royal Society of Victoria'
Victoria St., Melbourne (SEE MAP)
COST : \$1.00 donation per person. (for supper)

